



COUNTY OF SONOMA

PERMIT AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

2550 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95403
(707) 565-1900 FAX (707) 565-1103

To: Board of Supervisors
Planning Agency
State Department of Housing & Community Development (HCD)
State Office of Planning Research (OPR)

From: Jane Riley, Planner III (Housing)
Permit & Resource Management Department
County of Sonoma

Subject: Annual General Plan Progress Report
Year ending December 31, 2004

Date: September 27, 2005

10/31/05

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During calendar year 2004, Sonoma County made significant progress toward attaining its affordable housing goals. The Planning Commission considered and approved a very large package of Code Amendments to remove constraints to housing, provide better opportunities for housing, and to provide funds for affordable housing. The County issued building permits for 175 permanent affordable units last year, and for an additional 50 affordable farmworker and seasonal housing bunks. While during the previous Housing Element period, the County's affordable permits averaged just over 17% of all permits issued, during 2004 almost 50% of the new residential permits issued were for affordable units.

The County has achieved 42% of its overall regional housing need and 59% of its overall adopted housing objectives. With 60% of the Housing Element period having elapsed, the County continues to meet its objective for very-low income housing, and exceeds its objective for above-moderate income housing. Despite substantial progress, the county is behind its targeted objective for both low-income and moderate-income housing units.

INTRODUCTION

Government Code §65400 requires local agencies to provide an Annual General Plan Status Report ("Report") to the Board of Supervisors, the California Office of Planning and Research (OPR), and the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). The Report is due by October 1st of each year. The purpose of the Report is to provide an annual update to both the Board and the State on the County's progress in implementing the various policies and programs of its General Plan, with an emphasis on reporting its progress toward attaining its Housing Element Objectives. This memorandum constitutes the required Annual Report for the calendar year ending December 31, 2004.

Pursuant to the requirements of Government Code § 65400 for jurisdictions currently undertaking a comprehensive General Plan update, a brief report on the status of the General Plan Update is included at the end of this Report. The update of available housing sites required by the Adequate Sites Monitoring Program (Housing Element Program #10) is summarized within this Report, along with an update on the implementation of Housing Element Program #11, which requires the County to identify new sites with the potential for an additional 500 affordable rental units.

Because a comprehensive update of the Sonoma County General Plan is currently underway, the Report is focused on providing that specific housing-related information required by the Government Code, which includes the following components:

- 1) a numerical report of the County's progress in attaining its "fair share" of the regional housing need, by income category;
- 2) a discussion of the County's progress in implementing the policies and programs set forth in the Housing Element; and,
- 3) the measures which have been taken by the County to remove or reduce governmental constraints to the production of housing, as identified within the Housing Element.

2004 CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY

During calendar year 2004, the Building Division reported 197 building permits issued for single-family units and 57 issued for Second Dwelling Units (see *Table 1*, below). Building permits for a total of 86 multi-family units had been issued by the end of the calendar year. Of the 418 total units, bunks, and seasonal beds for which permits were issued during 2004, 235 (56%) were affordable.

Table 1: Residential Permits Issued During 2004, by Type

Unit Type	Total	Affordable
Single-Family Homes (not incl. 2 nd units)	197	30
Multiple-Family Homes (units)	86	80
Second Dwelling Units	57	55
Ag Employee & Farm Family Units	20	20
Units in Mixed Use Projects	8	0
Subtotal Residential Permits Issued (Units)	368	175
Year-round Farmworker Housing (Bunks)	20	20
Homeless/Transitional/Seasonal (Beds)	30	30
Subtotal Special Needs (Beds & Bunks)	50	50
Total Residential Permits, Beds & Bunks Issued	418	235

Second Dwelling Units

A total of 57 new Second Dwelling Units were issued building permits during 2004. Of this number, three (3) new Second Dwelling Units were provided under the County's new Affordable Second Unit Program, and are guaranteed affordable to renters at the "low" income level (60% of median) for at least 30 years.

Second Dwelling Units are considered affordable even without restrictions, with attached units and those created through the conversion or legalization of existing space generally having lower costs and very affordable monthly rents.

Units for Farmworkers

As an agricultural county, Sonoma has a significant need for farmworker housing. To this end, the County's objectives include the provision of both year-round and seasonal accommodations for farmworkers. During 2004, permits were issued for a 30-bed seasonal farmworker housing facility; a new 20-bed year-round farmworker housing facility, and 20 other new housing units for agricultural laborers and their families.

REGIONAL "FAIR SHARE" HOUSING NEED

The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) has prepared a *Regional Housing Needs Determination*, pursuant to Government Code Section 65584, for all jurisdictions within the County of Sonoma. In order to provide for the projected population growth within the region, Sonoma County was determined to need 6,799 new housing units by the end of 2006, including 1,563 units affordable to moderate-income households and 2,457 units affordable to lower (very-low and low) income households. As of the end of 2004, the County had provided 942 lower-income units, 209 moderate-income units, and 1,701 above-moderate income units. The remaining need during this planning period, which the state legislature has now extended until June 30, 2006, is for 1,485 lower-income units, 1,354 moderate-income units, and 1,108 above-moderate income units. This information is provided in *Table 2: Sonoma County's Progress in Meeting its Regional Housing Need Allocation*, attached at the end of this report.

Quantified Objectives for Lower- and Moderate-Income Housing Units

Sonoma County's certified Housing Element identifies 5-year Quantified Objectives for the unincorporated county which provide for approximately 46% of the identified 7-year regional housing need. The Quantified Objectives include a total of 1,571 units for lower and moderate income households to be provided during the current planning period (by the end of 2006). As of the end of 2004, the County had provided 854 affordable units, including 427 very-low income units, 227 low-income units, and 120 units for moderate income households (see Table 3, following).

Table 3: Housing Element Quantified Objectives for Affordable Housing, 2001-2006 as of 12/31/2004						
Targeted Income Group	Quantified Objective	Permits Issued	Units Approved¹	Total Provided	% Provided	Objective Remaining
Very-Low	705	346	81	427	61%	278 units
Low	504	180	47	227	45%	277 units
Moderate	362	117	3	120	33%	242 units
Above Moderate	1,317	746	171	917	70%	400 units

¹ Includes units for which planning and/or plan check applications have been approved, but for which building permits have not yet been issued. Does NOT include units in projects which are currently in the entitlement process but which have not yet received approvals.

As Table 3 shows, with 60% of the 5-year period for quantified objectives having elapsed, the County is directly on target for achieving its objective for very-low income units (61%), and has exceeded its target

for above-moderate units (71%). The County is not yet meeting its targeted objectives for low-income units (45%) or for moderate-income units (33%).

AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

The County strives to provide a variety of housing opportunities through construction and rehabilitation of residential units serving households with special needs as well as those with low- and very-low incomes. During 2004, the County proceeded with entitlements and permits for the following development projects which include affordable or special needs housing components:

- Airport Business Center (ABC) Apartments, 242 rental apartment units including 47 units reserved for very-low-income tenants (50% of median level).
- Larkfield Oaks, a 58- unit apartment complex with all units affordable to very-low income (50% of median) and low-income (60% of median) households.
- Meadowlark (Forestville Self-Help) Homes, a 30-unit sweat-equity project of affordable ownership units targeted to very-low through moderate-income households.
- DeAngelis Apartments, a 72-unit apartment complex which includes 12 low-income units and 6 special needs units.
- Pellascini Townhomes, a 42-unit apartment project which includes 8 low-income units.
- Woodstone Commons, an 8-lot single family subdivision which will include 2 affordable units.
- Chalk Hill Vineyards Farmworker Housing, providing permanent housing for 20 year-round farmworkers.
- Vineyard Worker Services, St. Leo's site - a seasonal farmworker facility for 30 migrant workers, approved each year by the Board of Supervisors.

ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN TO IMPLEMENT HOUSING ELEMENT PROGRAMS

A large number of actions have been undertaken by the County during the current planning period to implement the housing policies and programs set forth in the adopted Housing Element. A chart summarizing the County's progress to date on each of the Housing Element Programs is attached as Exhibit 1. Highlights of the actions taken to date are provided below:

Removing Governmental Constraints

In June of 2003, the County completed the following actions to remove regulations previously identified as potential governmental constraints to housing:

1. Amended the Zoning Ordinance to remove the requirement for a Use Permit for affordable housing projects located within 1/4 mile of another affordable project;
2. Amended the Zoning Ordinance to eliminate the Use Permit requirement for Second Dwelling Units, and to allow for larger Second Units on smaller lots where affordability is guaranteed;
3. Amended the Zoning Ordinance to allow small-scale homeless shelters in urban residential zoning districts; and

4. Amended the Zoning Ordinance to allow emergency homeless shelters with up to 50 beds in urban and industrial districts.
5. Amended the Zoning Ordinance to allow emergency homeless shelters with up to 50 beds in urban and industrial districts.

During calendar year 2004, the County held public hearings on the following Zoning Code amendments designed to further increase opportunities for housing development. Each of the following amendments have since been adopted:

1. Reduced Standards for High-Density development projects, including Type A density bonus projects in order to facilitate development of infill sites for affordable and high-density housing.
2. Revised Standards for Second Dwelling Units to allow Second Units to be created within or attached to larger agricultural structures, allowing the legalization of a number of non-permitted units which had been in the Code Enforcement abatement process.
3. Reduced Standards for Mobile Home Parks to allow existing parks to be expanded, and to reduce the acreage required to create a new park from 4 acres to 2 acres.
4. Amended the Zoning Ordinance to allow Farmworker Housing on Parcels that are otherwise protected by Williamson Act (Agricultural Preserve) contract.
5. Reduced the minimum number of units required for participation in the County's 100% density bonus programs. For Type A (rental) projects, the minimum number of base units was reduced from 4 to 2; for Type C (ownership) projects, the minimum number of base units was reduced from 5 to 4. This change was made to facilitate development of affordable units on small infill parcels, as well as to allow the legalization of a number of units that had been in the Code Enforcement abatement process.

Increasing Opportunities for Housing

The County also amended its Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Maps during June of 2003 to increase opportunities for affordable and special-needs housing, as follows:

1. Amended the Zoning Ordinance to require all residential projects within urban zone districts to be developed at not less than the mapped density shown on the General Plan Land Use Map, unless identified environmental constraints require a lesser density as mitigation;
2. Appended the Zoning Ordinance to add Article 85, Requests for Reasonable Accommodations under the Fair Housing Acts;
3. Approved General Plan Amendments and Rezoning of specific parcels to provide for more affordable housing, pursuant to Housing Programs #10 and #11 (see discussion, following).

During calendar year 2004, the County held public hearings on the following Zoning Code amendments designed to further increase opportunities for housing development. Each of the following amendments have since been adopted:

1. Adoption of a new Work-Live Ordinance, allowing integrated residential units within the M1 Urban Industrial Zone District.

SONOMA COUNTY HOUSING ELEMENT PROGRAM STAFFING

Housing Element Program	Short Program Description	H.E. Pg. No.	Responsibility	PRMD Staff	Time Frame	Status	Comments/Next Step
9.5 PROMOTE PRODUCTION OF SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING UNITS							
40	Reduce Constraints on Group Homes and Transitional Housing	142	PRMD	KJ	Integrated Development Code	Underway	Complete inventory, work with Special Needs groups
41	Support Inter-Jurisdictional Housing Coordinating Committee	143	CAO	n/a	New Program beginning 2001	Not Started	Planning Directors meet monthly, discuss needs
42	Homeless Shelters in All Urban Zoning Districts with a Use Permit	143	PRMD	JR	May-03	Completed	Completed
43	Small-Scale Homeless Shelters in Urban Service Areas	143	PRMD	KJ	Integrated Development Code	Completed	Completed
44	Churches to Operate Homeless Shelters	143	PRMD	KJ	New Program part of Integrated	Underway	GP2020, Integrated Development Code
45	Build Permanent Homeless Shelters and/or Commit Stable Sources of Funding	143	CAO	n/a	ongoing	Ongoing	Russell Ave. opened 11/03. Finley in process.
46	Fund a Survey and Study of the Homeless through the Community Development Commission	144	Office of Commissions, CDC	n/a	New Program in 2001	Completed	Completed
47	County Homeless Shelter	144	CAO	n/a	New program, ongoing	underway	Completed
48	Inventory Existing Group Homes	144	CDC, PRMD	JR	Oct 03 - Feb 04	Initiated	Initial data collected; need inventory
49	Subdivision of Williamson Act Lands for Farmworker Housing	144	PRMD, CDC	JR	May-03	Completed	Completed
50	Continue Annual Funding of a Fair Housing Program	144	CDC	n/a	ongoing	In place and ongoing	Completed & Ongoing
9.6 IMPROVE ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN HOUSING							
51	Promote Energy Efficiency in New and Existing Residential Structures	145	CDC	n/a	ongoing	Ongoing	Incorporate into Design Manual, design underway
9.7 OTHER PROGRAMS							
52	Farmworker Camp		PRMD/CDC	JR	Feb 03 - Dec 04?	Completed	Completed
*53	Second Units as a Use by Right (ZPE Only)		PRMD	JR	May-03	Completed	Completed
*56	Fair Access Request Process		PRMD	JR	May-03	Completed	Completed